



## Office of City Auditor Memorandum

DATE: January 14, 2005

TO: Patricia McInturff, Director, Seattle Human Services Department  
Jorge Carrasco, Superintendent, Seattle City Light

FROM: Susan Cohen, City Auditor *Susan Cohen*

RE: Follow up on the Office of City Auditor's January 2003 review *Low-Income Rate Assistance Programs*

SUMMARY OF FOLLOW-UP RESULTS ON 5 AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS	
Agency Responsible for Follow-up	Audit Recommendations Requiring Further Follow-up
Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens, Utility Assistance Program	None
Joint Seattle City Light and Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens, Utility Assistance Program	None

The Office of City Auditor has completed its follow-up of the January 2003 review *Low-Income Rate Assistance Programs* to determine whether its recommendations have been implemented. As part of this follow-up we interviewed managers and employees of Seattle City Light and the Seattle Human Services Department who are involved with the rate assistance programs. This audit was conducted in accordance with the Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing.

The recommendations made by the Office of City Auditor have been implemented or are in the process of being implemented with some modification by the Utility Assistance Program management. The matrix on page two notes each recommendation and to what degree it has been implemented.

We would like to thank the staff of the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens' Utility Assistance Program and the staff of Seattle City Light's Customer Services Division for their assistance in completing this follow-up.

cc: Selina Chow, Human Services Department Administrative Services Director  
Irene Stewart, Director, Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens, Human Services Department  
David Broom, Utility Assistance Program Supervisor, Human Services Department  
Joan Walters, Director, Seattle City Light Customer Services Branch  
Carol Dickenson, Director, Seattle City Light Customer Services Branch, Customer Relations and Credit

<b>Follow-up of the January 2003 Review <i>Low-Income Rate Assistance Programs</i></b>	
<b>Suggestion</b>	<b>Current Status</b>
1. Continue improving outreach	<p>Outreach activities added since the previous review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens has formed new partnerships as part of the <i>Help for Working Families</i> program. It works with the State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) and the County Health Department, so residents applying for food stamps, health care, rate assistance or other benefits are more likely to get cross-referrals.</li> <li>▪ MOSC has also entered into a contract with the state "language line" to enhance its service to applicants whose first language is other than English.</li> </ul>
2. Develop written procedures, guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ New Project Share guidelines have been adopted.</li> <li>▪ Rate 27 procedures are being revised.</li> <li>▪ New database program is self-prompting and self-checking.</li> <li>▪ MOSC has developed a "front desk manual."</li> </ul>
3. MOSC and SCL need to agree on Project Share guidelines	New guidelines have been adopted.
4. Computers are overloaded	New computers and new database have resolved this issue.
5. Seniors are not screened as carefully as non-senior applicants	The Utility Assistance Program selected a sample of senior applicants and asked them to submit the same documentation as low-income applicants. All were found to be eligible. Utility Assistance Program management is considering abandoning the sampling process as unnecessary, given the low risk.